



**Kalispel Tribe of
Indians**
Kalispel Tribal Headquarters
Usk, WA 99180



US Forest Service
Colville National Forest
Newport – Sullivan Lake Ranger Districts
Newport, WA 99156



**WA State Dept.
Of Natural Resources**
Northeast
Colville, WA 99114

Trail ‘Sx^wuytn’ Introductory Meeting Agenda

Meeting Type: Public

Date: November 7, 2018

Location: Camas Center

Time: 6:00 – 8:00 PM

Facilitator: Andrew Spaeth

TIME	AGENDA TOPIC	PURPOSE	PRESENTERS
6:00 – 6:30 PM	Introduction	Welcoming remarks from community leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curt Holmes (Tribal Council Member) • Steve Kiss (County Commissioner) • Shelly Short (State Senator-7th Dist.) • George Geissler – State Forester & Deputy Supervisor for Wildfire and Forest Health
6:30 – 7:00 PM	Process Overview	Process Introduction Map Preliminary Objectives Current Conditions Public Involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andrew Spaeth • Ray Entz • Sam Steinshouer • Gayne Sears • Mike Lithgow
Other 7:00 – 7:55 PM	Public Engagement	Question and Answer Session	Representatives from Kalispel Tribe of Indians, US Forest Service, and WA Department of Natural Resources available to respond to questions from the public.
7:55 – 8:00 PM	Closing	Final Remarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next Steps • Staying Engaged

Andrew welcomed everyone, and described logistics: agenda, public comment page, sign-in page to ensure we can keep interested parties/attendees up-to-date.

Council Member Curt Holmes, opened with opening prayer. Welcomed us and introduced his personal history on the land and his personal perspective.

Why this project?

- To improve forest resiliency to fire, (not only on the Reservation, but a larger part of the county);
- increase species diversity;
- improve size and space diversity;
- Improve aquatic organisms and fish hatches;
- improve and maintain water quality;
- identify where recreation facilities connect with needs to restore watershed health;
- Contribute to local economy through consistent supply, stewardship, and contract opportunities

With so many different ownerships within the project area it is important to work with everyone so that as many needs can be met as possible. Need to work with all entities within the project area, to ensure understanding. Best way to do that is through collaborative process.

Thanks to CNF and DNR, partners in the project, Northeast Washington Forest Coalition for grant assistance (Our Cross-Boundary grant through DNR was highest scoring grant application for this new grant, and was only grant awarded full amount requested). Thanks to the County for the support of the



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timber industry in the county. Thanks to the internal (Kalispell Tribe's) Natural Resource department. Thanks to all of the timber industry, especially Vaagen Brothers, with whom we speak often about what new things we can do.

Last note – the Kalispel Tribe believes that the timber industry is vital to the health of the county's economy. He hopes that all will ask their questions and voice their concerns for greater understanding through this project.

Steve Kiss, PO County Commissioner - The Commissioners are very concerned about the health of the Forest, threat of wildfire, while protecting private property rights. And to enhance the forests to maintain the Forest products industry. The County is excited and interested in helping to get the projects done, by working together through collaboration. If we work together it is for everyone's good.

State Senator Shelly Short - There used to be a lot of animosity and it was difficult to get projects to go forward because of appeals and such. The development of collaboratives as helped get this important work done. Those who work on this project, it will be hard work, but by working together there will be a better appreciation of the various needs. Through this project, there will be improved management through collaborative management rather than each entity working on their own. Everyone (county, CNF, DNR) have their own objectives, however working together, although complex, will help achieve better results for the resources as a whole. Shelly thanks the group for being part of the process, and looks forward to the progress of the project.

State Forester George Geissler - Working together, collaboratively, across boundaries is immensely important, can get more work done, and help provide better conditions by pooling our management tools and applying them as necessary to help reduce risks and improve resource conditions. These tools include Tribal Forest Protection Act (TFPA), Good Neighbor Authority (GNA), and other things such as grants for landowner assistance, etc. National Forests have Forest Plans, DNR has 20-year Forest Health Strategy. There will be upcoming meetings between the Regional Forester and DNR to identify where other projects, similar to this one, are needed to make meaningful progress on the lands to improve forest health and preserve the continued use of the resource for future generations. This is all part of the collaborative process happening across the state.

US Department of Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue, with Senator Cantwell announced in August the Shared Stewardship Investment Strategy... where the states, locals and federal agencies come together and discuss shared priorities, with their various "tools". Washington has been doing this (collaboration) for a very long time. Mr. Geissler is very excited to watch how this process/project begins and proceeds. He thanked everyone for being part of the process and project. Mr. Geissler committed DNR to helping in whatever way they can.

Andrew Spaeth – describes the purpose/goal of this project. One very important thing in the 20-year plan: plan and implement coordinated landscape-scale forest restoration and management strategies....

Ray Entz, Kalispell Tribe department of Natural Resources- This project is a TFPA request. The "Trust" includes a mushroom or a huckleberry...so really anything important to the Tribe. Need to look at the conditions of the whole project area to better assess and protect the land. When enter into the NEPA (National Environmental Protection Act) process, that evaluation will only consider National Forest System lands, however need to look at the whole project area. Explained how the Salish word "Sx'uuytn" means connecting people and lands (connection) which led to the informal name of Trail for the project. Very excited and nervous for the project.

Sam Steinshouer, DNR – Why are we here today? We are asking for input as to how we will work together with this large parcel in a collaborative setting. We want input/ideas of what additional values we would like to address. The 20-year Forest plan has identified this project area as at risk for wildfire, as



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well as other resources at risk, e.g., Wildland/urban interface (WUI), wildlife, and other interests. We want to hear all the concerns and see where we can go from here.

Gayne Sears, District Ranger for Newport-Sullivan Ranger Districts, Colville National Forest - We are each responsible for our own lands. Forest Service prescriptions are set for National Forest System (NFS) lands only. Similarly, DNR is responsible for DNR administered lands. Industrial Timberlands are responsible for lands under their ownerships. Forest Service evaluation will only be on CNF lands. These evaluations will be used as reference to other ownerships. CNF actions and prescriptions are ONLY ON NFS lands. The Tribe will have their own prescriptions for their lands, DNR will have prescriptions for their lands.

Mike Lithgow – This project is important and having the public engaged early and often is critical to the success of this project. Please contact Mike if you need more information, need questions answered, or if something is missing from website, etc.

Please make sure that you sign-in, fill out the one sheet of comments, questions, etc. so we can ensure that you are kept informed about your interests and the project's progress.

There will be a series of informational meetings by topic in next few weeks, etc. Review the letter – they will be over the next few months. Not all in November, as suggested in the letter.

Q & A

Private landowner with no forest lands, however I have other natural lands. How/where can private landowners get information on how to restore and improve natural resources on our lands?

Sam mentioned that there are some DNR programs for forest-specific needs - Small Landowner Assistance Program (Federal and State grants) as well as information for such activities. As for the satellite sawmill remains, there may be other programs. Another member of audience mentioned Conservation District also provides grants and resources. Tribe also has some resources and programs to offer assistance to private landowners. Forest Ownbey, DNR - Landowner Assistance Forester with the Small Private Landowner Forest Coordinator, is a resource to landowners.

County-wide wildfire protection plan program ... how will this project work with the county-wide program?

This project will work with that plan too. The county program will be used as part of the existing condition and will be considered in what activities to bring forward and where. This project will work hand in hand with existing plans.

Ray states that one of the goals is to inform entities of conditions and guide them to the processes that are needed. Currently need to determine what are our objectives and issues we as a group want to address.

Beed Lake property owners would like to know type of evaluations and what actions will be done within the landscape. Concerned about water conditions,

Ray reiterated that we are very early in process ... don't know what we will be doing specifically. We hear your concerns are: water quality, air quality what will happen to the lake, as there is no surface outlet.

Are other recreation groups being involved...groups from outside the area who may have a better idea of the trails, and recreation needs and opportunities?



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Similar to what is happening in the Chewelah area in preparation for the Chewelah A to Z project, there is the hope to form a group. Also, yes, other recreation interests are present this evening and invited to the process.

Industrial polluter may be moving in to our area. How will that entity be evaluated on the health forest this process?

At this time, we do not know how it will impact us. The question is important, and something we will need to consider, at this time it is only a potential. Such concerns should also be addressed in the Scoping for that project.

*NEPA – National Environmental Policy Act – environmental assessment/evaluation on National Forest system lands. The Forest will not be evaluating specific effects by the **possibility** of the smelter.*

Tower Fire was about 3 years ago. What is the natural progression? What are the steps? What is the Forest's norm/policy?

Need to probably address more fully at a lower level meeting specifically about wildfire.

Gayne described the evaluation of the project as far as fire severity. Generally speaking post fire activities depends on the severity. Post-fire activities are on a case-by-case basis. The conversation starts while the fire is still burning.

Ron Gray asked for a description of the process from the Forest's perspective from tonight through first activity on the ground.

Gayne described the roughly 2-4 years because of NEPA planning and contracting...but this would only be on NFS lands. Private and other lands may have other timelines, there are varying by issues. Stewardship contracts can go 10-20 years of work on the ground, similarly the TFWA provides 20 years to get the on the ground work done.

Would potential treatments between a wildfire and clearcut be the same?

Disturbance on the landscape differs based on the site-specific conditions, and so post-treatments would vary accordingly.

This is a tremendous project – might there be some employment opportunities available?

There may be some opportunities that may come after the planning process is completed and through contracting. Contracts for aquatic restoration or thinnings, or as subcontractor for various activities.

Is there a chance of incorporation of public education?

Maybe a demonstration site to exhibit fuels reduction with wildlife values improved/maintained. Ken Bevis, WSU is a Wildlife specialist with DNR. He has given some workshops about how to improve forest health without negatively impacting wildlife habitat values. Ken is available to meet with landowners to review their properties and provide input on potential treatments and meeting the needs of wildlife.

One of the reasons the project area is expanded so far south to include the Indian Creek Community forest – which is a great opportunity/location for such a program. Small Landowners' assistance office also has areas that interested people could visit to see what tools are available.

Is this federally funded project? Are we going to run out of money?



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Still in preliminary stages. Planning dollars right now are Tribal, and some from BIA, also, with NEWFC as a partner the Cross-Boundary grant from DNR. Implementation may come from a variety of potential sources...but we need to make a plan and determine what will need to happen, and then the funding will become more clear/definitive. The Forest Service is very committed to this project, and is very glad to be partnered with others to complete the planning stage. We have increased the pace and scale with this project, and because it is on the 5-year plan. We do not anticipate the lack of funding.

For clarification – this (Cross-Boundary) grant is a planning grant?

The short answer: YES. NEWFC, working with the Tribe, CNF, and DNR applied for, and received, \$400,000 in funding to complete the planning process. The individual special subject sessions are part of the planning process to determine the actions to be evaluated for the project.

As you are thinking about the project – what will be your concerns/priorities?

Will this project require other entities to implement projects?

The idea is that private landowners and other entities will learn from the group, and do what is right for their own property. The timing is up to the landowners. Gayne is responsible to make decisions for the NFS lands, DNR will make decisions on DNR administered lands, and the Tribe will do what is best for them.

Western white pine was here for a long time until the blister rust came out and we lost a large portion of this species in the area. We need to remember this when considering reforestation and restoration.

Western white pine is one of the most culturally significant species to the Kalispell Tribe, and there is a new project where the Tribe is developing a seed bank to be used for planting on appropriate sites. White bark pine is an important species to the ecosystem, both DNR and CNF have projects to increase white bark pine in appropriate conditions.

Canada lynx (a Federally listed Threatened species) is within the area. We need to make sure that USFWS is involved in this project.

As a Federal project, there is a requirement that the CNF consult with the USFWS and other agencies to ensure that the ESA is adhered to.

Concerns about prior/historical projects where after the activities have been completed there is an influx of invasive species, and the areas are left looking less than natural.

Yes, invasive species, aesthetics, replanting are things of great concern, and we can work to include such remedies to reduce and improve the conditions.

When forest thinning activities are completed the landscape looks very different for the first few years (e.g. broken trees, some bare soils, etc.). Prescribed burning after thinning will also change the look of the landscape, but within a few years, the ground cover (brush, grasses, berries) bounce back and the landscape looks more “natural” again.

Within our map, is there a priority area?

Not at this time. We only have high-level objectives, but no specific areas identified as this time. Those are expected to be developed through this process. That’s one of the reasons we are reaching out to the public. We need your help in identifying those areas that should be treated (e.g., improve forest health, reduce potential uncharacteristic fire)



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The County-wide fire plan has listed specific areas such as the WUI (Wildland-Urban Interface), etc. as priority areas. This is a base for priority, at least from the perspective of fire.

In closing:

Thanks again for coming! Please make sure to fill out the forms and ensure that at the very least your email address is up-to-date, as most communications will be by email and on the website (<https://www.kalispeltribe.com/kalispel-natural-resources-department/sxwutyn-trail-tribal-forest-protection-act>). The website is also mentioned in the letter. Please don't hesitate to contact Mike Lithgow if you need anything further.

Formal Meeting ended at 7:45 PM.